



WSC - Creating a Culture of Safety: Steps to a Supportive Work Environment

30 second summary:

- ✔ **Summary:** This article details how to systematically build a supportive and inclusive work environment that fosters psychological safety.
- ✔ **Main Outcome:** Improved psychological safety.
- ✔ **Top Benefit(s):** Higher employee engagement and reduced turnover.
- ✔ **Next Steps:** Assess current workplace culture and implement recommended safety practices.
- ✔ **Duration:** 10 minutes.
- ✔ **Target Audience:** HR Managers, Team Leaders.

Why it works

✔ **Before:**

A culture of safety is essential for fostering innovation, collaboration, and trust within teams. When employees feel safe, they are more likely to speak up, take risks, and contribute meaningfully. Psychological safety helps organizations navigate change, address challenges proactively, and build resilient, high-performing teams.

✔ **After**

This post will provide practical steps to establish and sustain a supportive work environment where team members feel valued and heard.

Psychological safety enables open communication, constructive conflict resolution, and higher engagement. It reduces fear-driven behavior and encourages employees to express their ideas, admit mistakes, and seek help without repercussions.



TO DO

Creating a culture of safety within the workplace is fundamental to fostering employee well-being and productivity. Here are the key steps to building such an environment:

✔ **Demonstrate Leadership Commitment:**

Leaders must visibly commit to creating and maintaining a safe work environment. This commitment should be evident in their actions, communication, and decision-making. Leadership should regularly communicate the importance of safety, lead by example, and allocate resources to support safety initiatives.

✔ **Promote Open Communication:**

Develop an atmosphere where open communication is encouraged. Employees should feel safe to voice their concerns, provide feedback, and share ideas without fear of negative consequences. This can be achieved through regular team meetings, anonymous feedback channels, and an open-door policy where employees know their voices are heard.

✔ **Implement Regular Feedback Mechanisms:**

Consistent and constructive feedback helps reinforce safe behaviors and correct unsafe practices. Establish a system where feedback is given frequently and is centered on improvement. Recognize and reward safe behaviors, and address issues promptly to maintain a high standard of safety.

✔ **Encourage Employee Participation:**

Involve employees in safety discussions and decision-making processes. When employees are part of the process, they are more engaged and committed to maintaining a safe environment. Encourage them to share their ideas for improving safety and involve them in developing and implementing safety plans.

✔ **Develop and Enforce Safety Protocols:**

Establish clear and comprehensive safety protocols that are consistently enforced. Ensure that all employees understand these protocols and the consequences of non-compliance. Regularly review and update these protocols to adapt to new challenges and improvements in safety practices.

✔ **Foster a Supportive Culture:**

Create a supportive culture where employees feel valued and respected. Encourage teamwork and collaboration and provide support for employees facing challenges. A supportive culture promotes trust and reduces stress, which are essential components of a safe work environment.



NOT DO

☑ **Don't Dismiss Concerns**

Saying “That’s not a big deal” discourages honesty and trust.

☑ **Don't Punish Risk-Taking**

If an idea fails, acknowledge the effort rather than placing blame.

☑ **Don't Let Dominant Voices Overpower Others**

Actively encourage quieter team members to contribute.

☑ **Don't Ignore Feedback**

If someone shares a concern, follow up to show you take it seriously.

☑ **Don't Assume Safety is “Handled”**

Psychological safety requires ongoing reinforcement.



Your next 2 weeks steps

☑ **Start NOW or schedule your first try:**

Apply TO DO right away (<30 minutes)

Once done, decide your commitment for the next 2 weeks

How are you feeling right after? Compared to before? What was the value for you?

What to adjust for you to commit for 2 weeks?

Visualize the next time you apply it and how you would like to feel

Celebrate that you have tried something new

☑ **Proposed Plan**

Week 1 (<10 minutes):

Utilize our interactive tool “Psychological Safety Meter” to evaluate your organization’s current practices against industry standards and discover areas for improvement.

Week 1: Awareness & Small Steps; every morning, for <5 minutes, think of your upcoming day:

- 1) Identify 3 moments where psychological safety could be improved in your team.
- 2) Implement one “TO DO” action in your next team interaction.
- 3) Visualize yourself observing reactions, noting any changes in engagement, and feeling good about the change.

Week 2: Implement & Strengthen; every morning, for <5 minutes, visualize yourself in your upcoming day:

Proactively asking for feedback on the team’s psychological safety.
Addressing one issue raised by the team and communicating your actions.
Encouraging someone hesitant to speak up by directly inviting their input.
You feeling very good about it

☑ **Build your habit (-> more practice -> more results)**

Model: After [OTHER CURRENT HABIT] and at/when [TIME], I will [NEW HABIT] in [LOCATION].

Example: Before I start my work day, I sit at my desk, I close my eyes, and I visualize myself feeling good after preparing my day for safety and even better at the end of the day after having successfully applied my ideas.

Print your sticky habit

☑ **Total time:**

5m/day X 10 + 10 minutes (week 1 only) = 60 minutes in 2 weeks



✔ **How you measure success:**

You have applied at least 10X times in the next 2 weeks

✔ **What value you can expect:**

Team opens up more and is more engaged: they take more initiatives which makes me feel more confident about their ability to deliver and leaves me more time for my other priorities

✔ **How to get started:**

Print and fill your Habit template then apply right away